

## ESF #4 - FIRE SUPPRESSION

### Participating Departments/Agencies:

Department of Environmental Quality  
State Fire Marshal  
Military Department  
Nebraska Emergency Management Agency  
Game and Parks Commission  
University of Nebraska System  
Department of Roads

### I. ESF #4 PURPOSE

- A. As a result of a Governor's emergency proclamation, provide state fire suppression resources to support the needs of local governments, voluntary organizations and other emergency groups in detecting and suppressing urban, rural, and wild land fires resulting from, or occurring coincidentally with, a significant disaster condition or event.
- B. To manage fire suppression support to local entities in the detection and suppression of fires, and mobilizing and providing personnel, equipment, and supplies in support of local entities.

### II. SITUATION

#### A. Disaster Condition

Under the best of circumstances, the management and coordination of a large fire suppression operation is complex and may involve multiple agencies. Fires which are of disastrous proportion, or which are coincident with any other disaster situation, will place excessive requirements upon local entities.

#### B. Assumptions

- 1. A major disaster or catastrophic event may result in many urban, rural, and wild land fires. Ignition sources that would normally be of a lesser concern grow in their potential under a disaster condition.
- 2. In disaster conditions, fires could spread rapidly, cause great damage, and seriously threaten lives and property. Fire departments in the immediate vicinity of the disaster incident would most likely be totally committed to such immediate area, and would probably be stretched beyond their response capacity. Their own and other fire suppression resources would be difficult to obtain, manage, coordinate, and utilize due to the disruption of

communication, transportation, utility, and water systems within disaster locales.

### III. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

- A. In support of ESF # 4, The Nebraska Forest Service will provide a representative to serve as the NEMA designated ESF coordinator (ESFC) for wild land fire emergencies. For other fire emergencies the Nebraska Fire Marshal will provide a representative to serve as the ESF Coordinator. In the event of a potential or real disaster event, the ESFC will be notified by the SEOC. Upon SEOC request, the ESFC will be available to respond to fire suppression requests submitted through the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency (NEMA). When activation of the SEOC is implemented, and the NEMA requests, the ESFC will activate ESF #4, identify which participating departments/agencies are needed, and take steps to insure that the departments/agencies are activated or on alert as appropriate.
- B. ESF #4 will:
  - 1. Coordinate state and other local resources from outside the disaster area;
  - 2. Coordinate utilization of federal fire suppression resources;
  - 3. Provide fire suppression resources to assist recovery efforts.
  - 4. Maintain inventories of available vehicular and personnel resources;
  - 5. Establish communications with appropriate field personnel and ensure that they are ready for timely response;
  - 6. Coordinate with Primary and Support departments/agencies to prioritize and develop strategies for a coordinated response;
  - 7. Pre-position resources when it becomes apparent that state fire suppression resources will be required;
  - 8. Track resources, which are committed to specific missions;
  - 9. Re-deploy and re-stage resources as appropriate.
  - 10. Maintain inventories of available Mutual Aid Districts vehicular and personnel resources;
  - 11. Coordinate with participating departments/agencies to prioritize and develop strategies for a coordinated response;

#### IV. ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

ESF #4 will utilize personnel and resources from participating departments/agencies to respond to mission assignments related to emergencies/disasters. Additional resources available at other ESFs may be coordinated and mobilized to support ESF #4 missions. When requests exceed the state's capability to respond the Interagency Cooperative Fire Management Agreement may be activated. Additional resources (i.e. federal resources, contractual agreements, and mutual aid agreements) will be mobilized. All personnel and resources mobilized by ESF #4 will receive mission direction from the NEMA Response Chief, through the ESF #4 Coordinator(s).

#### LIST OF ATTACHMENTS

ATTACHMENT	ITEM	PAGE
Appendix 1	State of Nebraska Annual Wildfire Operations Plan	ESF 4-5

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## STATE OF NEBRASKA ANNUAL WILDFIRE OPERATING PLAN

Dated  
May 1, 2003

I. General

Wildfire management activities are essential for the protection of human life, personal property and irreplaceable natural and cultural resources. High safety risks and expenses associated with fire management activities require exceptional skill and attention to detail when planning and implementing fire suppression activities. The objective of this Operating Plan is to establish a framework by which State resources will support the needs of Rural Fire Protection Districts in the detection, management and suppression of wildfires.

II. Purpose

The purpose of the Annual Wildfire Operating Plan (AWOP) is to ensure that the Nebraska State Emergency Operations Plan (SEOP) adequately documents the processes and procedures to be utilized by State resources in wildfire suppression activities. The AWOP is an attachment to Emergency Support Function #4 (Fire Suppression) of the SEOP. Areas of consideration include Firefighter Safety, Equipment, Training, Communications, Funding, and Incident Command System.

III. Responsibilities

- A. Nebraska Emergency Management Agency (NEMA). NEMA is responsible for the development and maintenance of the State Emergency Operations Plan (SEOP), and for coordinating emergency and disaster operations under the direction of the Governor. The NEMA State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) is responsible for receiving, coordinating, and approving wildfire suppression requests from Rural Fire Protection Districts for State resources. The SEOC will also serve as the State Interagency Dispatch Center as described in the Federal/State Annual Interagency Cooperative Fire Protection Agreement.
- B. Nebraska Forest Service, Fire Control Section. The Fire Control Section is responsible for providing an ESF #4 Coordinator (ESFC) and for providing service in 5 major program areas: Wildfire Suppression Training, Equipment, Pre-Suppression Planning, Wildfire Prevention and Aerial Fire Suppression.
- C. Nebraska Game and Parks Commission. The Game and Parks Commission is responsible for assisting with fire suppression on Commission owned land, and for provision of mutual aid fire suppression assistance to adjacent Rural Fire Protection Districts on a regular basis.

- D. Nebraska National Guard. The Nebraska National Guard is responsible for maintaining and providing State assets of ground and aerial wildfire suppression personnel and equipment.
- E. Nebraska State Fire Marshal. The State Fire Marshal serves as an ESF#4 Coordinator (ESFC) and is responsible for regulation of fire codes, fire investigation, fire inspection and fire plan review. The Training Division, with financial support from the Nebraska Forest Service Fire Control Section, provides a training curriculum to local fire departments that includes wildland fire control, aerial application, incident command, etc.
- F. Rural Fire Protection Districts. The boards of directors of Rural Fire Protection Districts have the power and duty to determine a general fire protection policy for the districts, and to maintain fire departments to serve the districts. Each Rural Fire Protection District has a responsibility to provide fire protection and response activities to all areas within its district.
- G. Governor. The Governor by law is responsible to meet the dangers to the State and its people caused by disasters or emergencies. The Governor may issue disaster proclamations and make, amend and rescind orders, rules and regulations to accomplish the objective of the State Emergency Management Act. Proclamation of a disaster emergency activates the disaster response and recovery aspects of the State Emergency Operations Plan. The Governor's Emergency Fund is used to support political subdivisions that have suffered from a disaster to such an extent as to impose a severe financial burden exceeding the ordinary capacity of the affected subdivision.

#### IV. Concept of Operations

##### A. General.

State wildfire suppression involves managing and coordinating State fire suppression support to local Rural Fire Protection Districts when the wildfires are beyond local control.

##### B. Actions.

1. The local Wildfire Incident Commander is responsible for notifying the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) when wildfires are beyond local control and State and/or Federal resources are requested. Any person authorized by the Wildfire Incident Commander may accomplish notification.
2. The SEOC Operations Officer will determine the appropriate Incident Severity Level (ISL) as described in the NEMA Operations Management System manual.

3. The SEOC will notify the local Emergency Management Director/Coordinator, the NEMA Assistant Director and the ESFCs for the Nebraska Forest Service Fire Control Section and the State Fire Marshal's Office of the local Incident Commander's request for State and/or Federal wildfire suppression response. The ESFCs may be requested to relocate to the SEOC.
  4. At ISL 3 or 4 or by management direction, the SEOC will be activated to at least ALERT Status.
  5. The NEMA Assistant Director will serve as the overall state coordinator for policy direction and response and will coordinate with the Adjutant General and Governor for state response and utilization of the Governor's Emergency Fund.
  6. SEOC staff will establish an Incident Status Report, Governor's Proclamation, Incident Action Plan and Mission Assignment(s).
  7. SEOC staff will provide on-going inter-agency coordination with State agencies involved in the response effort to ensure adequate allocation of State assets.
  8. SEOC staff will provide linkage and inter-agency coordination with the National Wildfire Coordinating Group for any Federal response efforts.
  9. SEOC staff will assist local and State agencies in developing and coordinating recovery action plans.
- C. Incident Command System. Agencies providing assistance under this Operating Plan will function under the concepts of the Incident Command System as appropriate for providing qualified resources. Qualifications for local resources utilized on their own jurisdictions for fire suppression will meet local standards. No State assets will be committed for Rural Fire Protection District assistance unless a clearly identifiable incident command system has been verified as being utilized.
- D. Aerial Wildfire Detection. The Governor has authorized local emergency managers to dispatch aerial detection missions upon request by the local Rural Fire Protection District Chief. This provides a means to detect and suppress wildfires in their early stages, thus preventing loss of life and property.
- E. Aerial Fire Suppression. As the administrator of the Governor's Emergency Fund, the Adjutant General has authorized local fire chiefs to initiate fire retardant spray missions through local participating aerial applicators up to a maximum expenditure of \$10,000 per incident. Authorization must be obtained through NEMA for expenditures above \$10,000. The Nebraska Forest Service Fire Control Section coordinates registration of private aerial applicators and storage of fire retardant materials throughout the State. The State Fire Marshal provides a training curriculum to local fire departments that includes aerial application.

- NEMA is notified by the authorizing Fire Chief and pays for aerial applicator costs from the Governor's Emergency Fund.
- F. Aerial Wildfire Observation. The Governor has authorized wildfire incident commanders to dispatch aerial observation missions as a means to gather information to assist in wildfire suppression decisions and to coordinate aerial wildfire suppression activities.
  - G. Firefighter Safety. State wildfire suppression assets will meet the requirements established by the Nebraska Wildfire Coordinating Council which are based upon the Wildland and Prescribed Fire Qualification System Guide PMS 310-1 as published by the National Wildfire Coordinating Group.
  - H. State Wildfire Suppression Resources. The SEOC Logistics Unit will maintain a current database of all available State Wildfire Suppression assets with guidance from the ESF#4 Coordinators.
  - I. Communications. The NEMA Communications Section will maintain a field-deployable communications system of portable repeater(s), hand-held radio(s) and wireless telephone(s) to support incident management functions at the local level.
  - J. Formal Request for State Assistance. The local emergency manager/coordinator will be requested to obtain a local emergency declaration from the affected county or counties. Such local emergency declaration will serve as the formal request for state assistance as described in the State of Nebraska Governor's Emergency Fund "Guidelines for Public Officials", May 2001).
  - K. Funding. Upon issuing a state of emergency proclamation, the Governor may make funds available from the Governor's Emergency Fund for State wildfire operations support to local Rural Fire Protection Districts. The Adjutant General, through NEMA, is responsible for the administration of Fund expenditures. Funds available from the Governor's Emergency Fund may be utilized to:
    - 1. fund State response assets, and
    - 2. provide financial assistance to Rural Fire Protection Districts. Financial assistance to Rural Fire Protection Districts will be in the form of **reimbursement** after the Rural Fire Protection Districts have submitted approved claims to the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency. (Refer to State of Nebraska Governor's Emergency Fund "Guidelines for Public Officials", May 2001).
  - L. Funding State Response Assets. Legislative intent (81-829.42 (3)) is that the first recourse of funding shall be to funds regularly appropriated to state agencies. If the Governor finds that the demands placed upon these funds are unreasonably great, funds may be made available from the Governor's



Emergency Fund to meet the intent of the Nebraska State Emergency Operations Plan.

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